

SACRED DANCE GUILD JOURNAL

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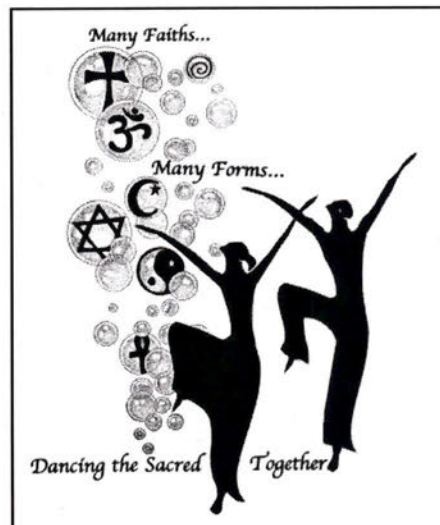
Many Faiths, Many Forms, Dancing the Sacred Together

The Northern California Chapter of the Sacred Dance Guild would like to invite you to attend our action packed mini-festival, Many Faiths, Many Forms, Dancing the Sacred Together, on October 22-24 at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley California!

Presenters: We start at noon on Friday with a Lunch Discussion followed by a workshop on The Dancing and Healing Spirit of the East presented by Leah Tolentino who is the first recipient of the Center for Art, Religion and Education (CARE)'s new Specialty Certificate in Sacred Dance which students may earn as part of their M.Div, M.A, M.T.S., or Ph.D. degree work at the seminaries associated with the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley California. Leah is a facilitator of renewal and transformation from the Philippines who uses dance and embodied approaches for ministries of healing, compassion and justice. She is a member of the Guild and hopes to take the Guild back to the Philippines with her when she completes her studies.

Leah's workshop is followed by Dances of Universal Peace with Tui Wilchinsky, and, in the evening, a Jewish Ecstatic Prayer Ritual with Yehudit Steinberg and the live music of Rebbe Soul. We end the evening with an ice cream social!

Saturday starts with two choices of warm ups followed by a new workshop from Carla DeSola based on her wonderful interfaith service, Beyond Words, presented last fall at the Graduate Theological Union. We also have workshops on Liturgical Dance (Susan Olsen), Storyteller's Body-Mynd (Kristin Robinson), and Auana Style Hawaiian Contemporary Dance (Tammy Blackseth). Teenagers are welcome to attend any of the



workshops, but will be delighted to hear that Talia Albrecht will present a workshop geared especially for them and younger children using hip hop, scarves, and circle dances. Young people and adults alike will enjoy Dancing and Performing the Story of the Universe with Marlys Tobias. The afternoon will end with Sacred Circle Dances with Maureen Atkins!

Saturday evening our concert features Omega West dancing some of the dances performed in Carla DeSola's Beyond Words interfaith service and continues the theme of Many Faiths, Many Forms by bringing dancers from many different traditions as well as our more familiar Christian liturgical dance as represented by the Soaring Spirit dancers.

Sunday starts again with two choices of warm ups followed by Interplay and the Dance Forms of Thailand (John McConville), Imagining Peace (Audrey Woodsmith), Afro-Caribbean (Loretta Green) and Dancing with the Souls of Our Children (Kay Robbiano-Chlebdá). We hope also to have a workshop with some members

of the Mevlevi Order of America (Whirling Dervishes). This is not confirmed yet. This group traces their lineage back to the Sufi poet Rumi.

We will end with an Interfaith Service where we can all, representing our Many Faiths, and Many Forms, Dance the Sacred Together.

Housing and Food: Our lunch break for all three days will feature brown bag lunches and panel discussions on various topics. The lunches will be catered by Grub N Go (www.grubngo.net). Although we will have coffee and pastries for sale in the mornings, breakfast and dinner will be on your own. There are many wonderful restaurants in Berkeley, many within walking distance of Pacific School of Religion, and we will pro-

Continued on page 8

"Awakening Joy" Northern New Jersey Mini-Festival 2004

The Northern New Jersey Sacred Dance Guild Mini-Festival will be an event-filled weekend with something for everyone. Beginning on Friday, November 5, with introductions and sharing and concluding on Sunday, November 7, with an ecumenical church service for all who wish to attend, the Festival has activities for young and old alike as well as for both experienced and novice dancers. It takes place at the First United Methodist Church, 24 North Fullerton Avenue, Montclair, New Jersey. Contact Mrs. Sylvia B. Bryant - Northern New Jersey Sacred Dance Guild Regional Director, e-mail sbr719@aol.com.

...from the incoming President

As your new President, let me begin by introducing myself. I've been a member of the Sacred Dance Guild for over 25 years. I discovered the Guild by chance, and found myself in an active region which soon became the Constitution Chapter of the Guild (now comprising southeastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and the state of Delaware). I served as Membership Director under Barrie Gibby's leadership, 1984-86, and was a Director-at-Large for a three year term after that. I've been Recording Secretary for the current Executive Board from 2001-2004.

A lot has changed since I joined the Guild. Chapters then were only an idea; now we have ten. In my first Board experience, the new President had to gather a new Board from her own area so that we could meet together.

Now we draw from all over and so have more continuity. Now we have a website which gives us wider visibility both across North America and beyond

- we are truly international.

But one thing has not changed. We have no more members now than we did twenty years ago. This means that we are trying to run a more complex organization on very limited resources (both money and energy). It also means that when a person joins who is not in a chapter area, they may never meet another Guild member, unless they can travel to a Festival.

Isn't this strange? If sacred dance has meant so much to us, don't you think there must be many others for whom it is - or could be - an important part of spirituality and worship? One of my commitments for my term as President is to find out why we seem to have gotten stuck in this way, and to ask how we can become "all we're meant to be." I invite you to join in this conversation - this dance of ideas - by contacting me at EllenSDG@cs.com, or by writing your own ideas to the *Journal*.

Ellen Roberts Young

Thanks for the Memory

At the July Annual Meeting I handed over the SDG Presidency to longtime active and faithful member Ellen Young. After four and a half years, it was time for me to move on to other projects, and time for the Guild to enjoy a new hand at the helm as we steer through the waters of restructuring. It was with abundant fullness that I gave her the official documents that must always remain with the President: fullness for the wisdom and experience Ellen is bringing to the position, and gratitude for the marvelous years I was privileged to spend as your President. Laurens van der Post posits that the, "African Bushmen loved dancing so much that they had a dance for everything. Where their words, stories and paintings failed them, the dance took over. So they danced as perhaps only the stars and Shiva danced at the heart of the stillness of the darkness to shake it into light."

I would assert that sacred dancers in general have a dance for everything. In these four and a half years I have relished the opportunities to dance with you, in your struggles and your celebrations, your fears and passions. There is a dance for everything, and the SDG President has the occasion to interact with many of you when events in your lives skew off the everyday. Thank you for sharing your lives with me, and for letting me share in your dance, whether in person, over the phone, through email, or hand written words. Thanks to those



Karen Josephson in the hat Lucy Knopf made for her.

of you who communicated issues that the Guild was not addressing in ways you found comfortable. Thanks to those of you who found the time to express how encouraging the Guild is to your journey. Thanks to all of you for being a part of this grand organization.

Those of us engaged in the realm of sacred dance are pioneers, who know the empowering act of the dance, who know beyond the shadow of a doubt that we are dancing at the heart of the stillness, invoking divine participation for the light. Thanks for helping us all hold that knowledge at the core of our dances. Thanks for all you are doing in your corner of the world to demonstrate the power of the dance. Thanks for your continued support of the Sacred Dance Guild. Thanks for trusting in me as your President for four and a half years. Thanks for all the memories.



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The JOURNAL is the official publication of the Sacred Dance Guild, a non-profit international corporation, founded in 1958, and providing members with information and opportunities for enriching their faith through movement and dance. Reprints of articles in the JOURNAL are by permission of the Editor only. The Directory is intended only for the use of Guild members in carrying out the activities and purposes of the Guild.

Policy Statement The Sacred Dance Guild recommends and encourages its members to list their SDG affiliation when presenting workshops and performances. However, the Guild letterhead, logo and name are to be used only in connection with official Guild business and activities, as endorsed by a Chapter Board, Regional Director or Guild Executive Board. Official address: Sacred Dance Guild, P.O. Box 1046, Laurel, MD 10725-1046. Headquarters' address: Ellen Roberts Young, 214 East Athens Avenue, Ardmore, PA 19003. Editor's Address: Toni' Intravaia, 201 Hewitt, Carbondale, IL 62901. © Sacred Dance Guild, Inc. All rights reserved. ISSN 1043-5328. Sacred Dance Guild Web Site: www.sacreddanceguild.org

Corporate subscriptions to the JOURNAL are available for \$35. Membership to the Sacred Dance Guild is also available for the following rates: One-Year Membership (Domestic AND International, US Dollars) \$35.00; Two-Year Membership (Domestic AND International, US Dollars) \$62.00; One-Year Student and Senior (65+) Membership \$25.00; One-Year Group Membership \$82.00 and Life Membership \$1000.00. For Non-Members, the JOURNAL is \$24.00 per year. Members receive:

- Sacred Dance Guild Journal published three times a year
- Membership Directory with geographical and leadership listings printed annually
- Calendar of Events published in the Journal and online with regional, national, and international activities
- Membership in Chapter or Region with local events and activities
- Reduced fees at the International Festival held annually in different locations within the United States
- Reduced fees at Guild workshops and those of reciprocal organizations
- Reduced cost for all Guild publications
- Opportunity to be listed as a resource in the Online Resource Database
- Opportunity to create your own website to be linked to the SDG website
- Ability to sign up for email reminders for events listed on SDG Event Calendars
- Opportunity to be part of the All Members e-list where sacred dance issues, concerns, and ideas are shared among members from all over the world.

Send subscription or membership order to SDG Membership Director Connie Tyler, 2322 Eighth Street, Berkeley, CA 94710.

Deadlines for the JOURNAL: August 15, November 15 and March 15. Deadlines for the Events Calendar are the same as for the Journal. Articles of 500 words or less, dance activity, Chapter/Region/membership news, letters and black and white/color photographs should be sent by deadline dates to: Sacred Dance Guild Journal, journal@sacreddanceguild.org or to Toni' Intravaia, Editor, 201 Hewitt, Carbondale, IL 62901.

EDITORIAL

First, thank all of you for your concern by way of flowers, notes, calls and e-mails since my accident of March when I broke my neck.

Now with a few apologies: pictures have not been up to SDG standards. We need clean photos - not copies thereof. I think those included this time you will find to be very good. Another error occurred on the Ballot. Kat Pettycrew should have been listed as Resource Director.

The Mini-Festivals have been great. Do look in this *Journal* for praises and check to see if you can attend the remaining in October 22-24 (Northern California Chapter) and November 5-7 (Northern New Jersey).

If any of you are fluent in other languages, and would be interested in translating our brochure, contact Public Relations Director Wendy Morrell, 2931 Ahearn Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K28 742 or e-mail wendy.morrell@sympatico.ca.

"Journal Jewels" contains the contents of each *Journal*. What else could we put in to give "Journal Jewels" a lift? SDG Readers we now have a **Journal Editorial Committee**. This Committee will certainly be aware of and help in various ways to get your *Journal* into moving forward to be of real value to each of you.

In each *Journal* we want to include news on youth, academic thinking and choreography "how-to." (In this connection, is there anyone in the Sacred Dance Guild who would like to be Youth Director?) Also the *Journal* needs to keep up with artistic/mechanical age in which we live.

The theme for the winter *Journal* will be "Roots and Branches."

Indexing of the *Journal* is slowly moving along with the help of Lucy Knopf and Mark Moloney.

Please continue to send your news, as well as dates for the Calendar of Events, to journal@sacreddanceguild.org or Toni' Intravaia, Editor, 201 Hewitt, Carbondale, IL 62901, and send your news from chapters and regions to Director of Chapters and Regions, P. Merle Wade, 611 Plainfield Avenue, Plainfield, NJ 07060-2118. The deadlines are August 15, November 15 and March 15.

Donations to our annual appeal are still sought. The Bookkeeper says we are in the red and could use your loving, dancing dollars.

Letters to the Editor

From Diane Tucker

I wanted to report many gifts coming in dance. I was fortunate to travel to China with my son in January, and the first morning I awakened in Shanghai to go right away to the park, where I found an old gentleman doing Tai Chi with a long sword. I got behind him, following his every move, and when we were done he turned to say: "I am 83 years old." This was the only English he knew! Then, in Kungming, I did Tai Chi with a wonderful group of jolly women each morning, and we went for over an hour. I was thrilled, and also found another solitary gentleman who lifted himself so solemnly that I made his meditation into a dance later which lifted me for months. Here is the poem which came from out of the dance:

I am woman. I am hidden.
You will not know who I am.

I open and close
like little yellow flowers

I kiss your lips tenderly
I kiss your feet like birds

I hold your dreams
fragile dreams not broken

Giving thanks down low
I squat long and flat, so slow

God's heart came to me
tiny new shoots of rice

The moon cannot catch me
The sun is my friend.
Alleluya, alleluya,
alleluya to end.

From Dewayne and Ginnie Lowther

We first learned of the Sacred Dance Guild *Journal* when Sylvia asked us to send the image to you.

On another subject, we were the official photojournalists for the 2004 General Conference of the United Methodist Church which was held in Pittsburgh from April 27 - May 7. As you may know, this was a quadrennial, global gathering.

In that capacity, we were privileged to photojournal performances by over 50 musical groups from around the world and several liturgical dance groups whose participation was choreographed by Kappitola Williams from Atlanta, Georgia. She worked in cooperation with Barbara Day Miller from Candler Seminary.

Don't have complete list at hand, but the following groups were involved: Kap N Kompany Dancers, Atlanta, GA; St. James UMC Dance Ministry, Alpharetta, GA; Liturgical Dance Choir, Gales Ferry, CT; Living Springs Christian Fellowship Liturgical Dance Ministry, Bowie, MD; North Country Ballet Ensemble Liturgical Dance Troupe, Plattsburgh, NY; Sacred Dance Choir, Contoocook, NH.

It was an awesome ten days!

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DANCE AS TRANSFORMATION

"YOU WILL TURN THEIR MOURNING INTO DANCING"

by Sister Martha Ann Kirk, Th.D.

Ada, my mother, loved learning and life. She wrote of the beauty of the earth and the family land purchased in 1877 as a piece of God's precious creation. In light of her love for nature and for exercise, at 78 she entered the town's first five-kilometer



"Wildflower Wellness Run" and got the first place trophy for a Woman Over 60. She said, "I wasn't very fast, it was just that no one else my age would do the race." After all, she had always loved the country roads with spring flowers and she would briskly walk a few miles most evenings "not to get rusty." That same year, she came with me to the national Sacred Dance Guild Festival where I was presenting and she energetically participated in the liturgical dance workshops. As she explained, the dance was to be a prayer so the technique didn't have to be perfect...she liked to pray so she could just dance any way she wanted to.

In May of her eightieth year, Ada was still enthusiastically teaching high school English honors classes half time. She retired that summer, but the following year she was still helping to teach scripture at her church. On Palm Sunday she taught the mysteries of suffering, death, and new life. She also broke her wonderful, warm homemade cinnamon rolls with the class, a sweet eucharist that she celebrated so well. The day after Palm Sunday, she was hospitalized with heart problems. For one month she was confined to a hospital bed, and then set free.

The funeral home was packed for the Vigil Service. I didn't know until the

moment it started if I would have the courage to dance, but she had done the joyful, grateful dance of life and dancing release was the least I could do. Over a thousand times she had driven me to or from a dance class, not to mention how many thousand stitches she had put into dance costumes! I was wearing her deep purple dress, a Mexican flowing cotton gauze dress with shiny purple ribbon. I held the orange and purple silk scarf that I brought her from a market stall near the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem like a foreshadowing cloth from where they had wrapped Jesus.

My dance began like unfolding wings. "I will raise you up on eagle's wings, hold you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun." Then I cradled arms and hands, "And hold you, hold you in the palm of my hands" ("Eagle's Wings" by Michael Joncas). The Bible has many images of God as a mother bird hovering and protecting her little ones. Jesus had compared himself to such a mother as he looked down at Jerusalem. Scripture has another idea of a mother bird. A mother eagle teaches her young to fly by holding her on her back, then beginning to fly, and finally swooping out from under the little bird coaxing it to fly freely. One would rather ride on the mother forever, but one needs to learn to fly alone.

At first I danced at a distance from the coffin. The deep purple I wore matched the deep purple shrouding her cold body. Finally I had the courage to dance closer for she wanted to dance through me. As I threw the silk scarf and it floated gently glimmering, she was freer and freer to soar. For one month she had been tied down in bed so that she would not pull out the respirator or tubes with nourishment. We kept telling her we loved her, we wanted her. Somewhere deep within me was a line from the poet Tagore which she had taught me, "May my love be like sunlight." Our love needed to be transformed from the love that ties down to the sunlight love that warms, that invites more life, that let's one go free. My brother and I, just for an instant, were beginning to learn that sunlight love. In that instant of sunlight love, she could dance, she would soar to what eye has not seen and ear has not heard. I kept dancing. "The snare of the fowler will never capture you and famine will bring you no fear."

I tried to embody the words of the psalmist of mourning being turned into dancing. I could not do a dance of joy, but

the power of the resurrection began to stir my body. John the Baptist leapt in Elizabeth's womb when Mary and the unborn Jesus visited. I was learning to leap outside of Ada's womb though it was very hard. I danced reaching out and touching her cold hand. As Michelangelo's Creator's hand giving spirit to Adam, she was even then filling me with spirit. Yes, the beginning of Genesis speaks of the Ruah, the air, the breath, the wind, that hovered over the chaos bringing forth creation. My life was in chaos. I did not know how to live without a mother. Momma was always here, her womb encircled and nurtured me, her arms cradled me. All were fragments, chaotic clumps, but the Spirit of God hovered over the chaos. The dance continued. Sometimes I hovered, sometimes I was held, sometimes I slumped in sorrow, sometimes I soared in freedom.

In the Middle Ages when tragedies like the Bubonic Plague took two thirds of the population, church people searched for ways to teach one to be prepared. Death dressed as a skeleton came to dance with prince, pauper, and pope, with maiden and monarch. Death personified came to church festivals and invited someone to dance. Both laughter and terror ran through the crowd as this partner appeared. No one wants to dance with her, but the truly wise finally learn as St. Francis did to welcome Sister Death, whom he praises in his Canticle to Brother Sun, Sister Moon, Brother Fire, and Sister Water.

I am beginning to learn some of the rhythm of the last part welcoming Sister Death. Sister Death leads one into the cosmic dance, more splendid and spirited than we can imagine. Ada, whose second name was Sophie, that is Wisdom, had pasted a card on her study wall: "This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalm 118:24). She recognized beauty. Ada invited us to live in joy, hope, gratitude, wonder, generosity, wisdom, and love. Dance in the face of death. Living faith is not all about the resurrection of the words, it is about the resurrection of the body. Whatever that is, we don't really know, but dance, for "in my flesh I know that my redeemer lives."

(See the complete version of this in "The Serendipitous Dance of Death" © Martha Ann Kirk, in "Wising Up: Women, Rituals, and Aging" edited by Kathy Black and Heather Murray Elkins, Pilgrim Press, forthcoming.)

A TRANSFORMATIONAL STORY

Reported by Kathryn Mihelick

Touch a child's heart? Transcend a pastor's negative reservations? Transform a congregation? Can dance do that? Yes, it can.

The following is one of several letters written in support of sacred/liturgical dance and sent to the Executive Director of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. It was forwarded in response to his request to me that personal narrative experiences be compiled for presentation to the bishops pursuant to their consideration of the appropriateness of dance as worship, which was then placed on the agenda of their semi-annual conference last year. I share this with you, my Guild sisters and brothers, because it affirmed our dance ministries, and touched my heart in ways I shall never forget. You see, it was written by my son.....

Dear Msgr. Moroney,

I want to share an experience that touched the lives of myself, my family, and an elementary school.

About 10 years ago my family and I lived in Findlay, Ohio. We were members of St. Michael's parish and our children attended St. Michael's Elementary School. St. Michael's held special "class Masses" for the students each month during the week. Classes at the school took turns "planning" the class Mass. When the class of our oldest son was next to plan the Mass, I suggested to his teacher that she consider including sacred dance in the Mass celebration.

I have been to a number of services and Masses in which sacred dance was involved. I always felt additionally fulfilled when dance was included in the Mass. Consequently, I was eager to share this new experience with the St. Michael's School students and faculty. To my delight, my son's teacher got permission from the pastor to go forward with a sacred dance piece. I contacted my mother, Kathryn Mihelick, and asked if she would make the three hour drive and introduce sacred dance to my son and his school at a class Mass. She graciously accepted.

The night before the class Mass, she came into town and asked if she could see the church so that she could adjust her prayer of dance to the physical layout of the church. I got permission from the pastor, who admitted to me that he was not entirely comfortable with the idea of sacred dance, as it was new to him. I arranged a time with the Pastor when my mother could see the church. When this time arrived, understandably, the pastor himself was present. Our pastor stayed in the church for the 30 minutes or so that she was there, and they actually talked for about 20 minutes. The pastor felt more comfortable after seeing her sacred dance, and allowed the sacred dance to be included in the class Mass.

Well, the next day the Mass went on as scheduled. The response to my mother's dance of prayer was wonderfully received by the students, faculty, and other parish residents who attended. In addition, after communion and before closing the Mass, the Pastor (who officiated at the service) actually asked her if she would come up and hold a brief question and answer period. Many questions, and even a standing ovation followed. Kathryn was given an open invitation to return.

How much impact did this sacred dance have? Well....my job took my family and me out of Findlay, Ohio, and into Michigan (Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Holland, Michigan) about 9 years ago. Last month, my brother, who has been living in Atlanta, Georgia, called to say that his job was taking him to, of all places, Findlay, Ohio. My brother went on to say that when his wife enrolled their children into St. Michael's School, the secretary recognized the last name and asked if she was related to me. When my brother's wife said that indeed she was related, the secretary told her about....the class Mass with the liturgical dance! Ten years after this Mass, hundreds of Masses and students in between, and she remembered this particular Mass! In fact, a teacher later told my sister-in-law that she was still using a video of it for discussion with the children.

I continue to support sacred dance and my mother's Leaven Dance Company in any way I can. Mom, thank you for the impression that you had on my son and countless others in Findlay, Ohio, 10 years ago. Keep spreading the word of God.

Sincerely,
David Mihelick
St. Thomas A'Beckett Church
Canton, Michigan

What Is Transformational Dance?

By Wendy Behr

Transformational Dance is many things, but the one thing it is not is a traditional dance class. Instead, it is a way of using movement and dance for personal/spiritual growth and transformation. It is about taking a journey into your heart and soul using dance as the means to get there. It is about bypassing the mind and using the wisdom of the body to reconnect with your heart. It is about applying unconditional love to all parts of your life. It is about releasing what doesn't work for you and nurturing what does, and then consciously anchoring what works through physical expression.

A core concept is the idea that judgments and negative thinking can rob you of the experience of your true nature, which is love, beauty, joy and peace. Through a variety of specifically designed techniques that include improvisation, guided imagery, dance affirmations, mirror work, journaling, sacred dance, forgiveness exercises and role-play, you can safely explore your judgments and break free of them. The result is that you are empowered to create more of what you want because there is no longer anything holding you back!

Some of the themes explored are: making friends with your "inner dragon", finding and demonstrating your courage and power, releasing your joy and passion, healing judgments of your body, and expressing your authentic self. Great care is taken

to provide a safe and sacred space in which each person's individual journey is honored and celebrated.

Wendy Behr has been dancing for over 25 years and teaching for over 20. She holds Masters degrees in three fields: Dance Education, Spiritual Psychology and Social Work. She has been a member of the Guild for most of the last 22 years and has served as Regional Director for Tennessee for the last two years.

Some comments from participants:

Rarely in my life have I experienced such an amazing and deep transformation as during this class. I needed to be free of the crippling self-judgments I was holding in order to move on with my life. Thank you for bringing a gentle light into places that years of therapy might never touch.

A truly gifted instructor! It takes a special person with empathy and compassion to facilitate a class such as this, to be able to honor the participants, in every way, especially in an area where they could easily feel embarrassed and intimidated. I saw people blossom and embrace themselves in very empowering ways - it is amazing, beautiful work!

This was a really meaningful and satisfying experience. I have continued to sing/dance my affirmation daily and I know it has really impacted my life. Wendy is a precious, beautiful, generous and gifted woman who graced us with safe and wonderful opportunities to experience fun, joy, healing and connection!

TRANSFORMING THE SOUL THROUGH DANCE

By Rahul Acharya

The simplest definition of dance is a rhythmical skipping and stepping, with regular turnings and movements of the limbs and body, usually to the accompaniment of music. Every living being is instinctively engaged in rhythmic movements to express its characters. For example certain birds and animals have their dances of courtship. The instinctive nature of dance can be seen in the very young, for children, even babies, move quite naturally to the rhythmic impulses they feel within themselves.

The intelligent human beings, who have been empowered to think, found that the rhythmic movements had a powerful effect on the mind and produced a supernatural feeling. From this they developed the idea of magic. When they repeated their dance, they found that they could recreate the feeling of magic power.

Dance has inculcated the sense of rhythm in all living beings. The earth moves round the sun in a rhythm, the wind blows in a rhythm, the rain showers in a rhythm, every microscopic organism also has a rhythm. In this universe everything is based on rhythm. Without rhythm time has no definition. Mathematically, rhythm is nothing but the division of time. Therefore dance is the rhythm of life and living beings i.e. dance or impulsive movements suggest

the presence of life in an object.

For ages dance has been considered as an art. It is probably the easiest of all the arts. Every person has an instinctive sense of dance. All the same it is very difficult to provide a correct definition for dance because its antiquity, vastness and multiple facets make it impossible to make a total conclusive statement.

In India, the tradition of dance is deeply rooted in religion and the dancer who undergoes deep mystical experiences, leading to a state of trance, is considered to be a perfect embodiment of what the treatises on Indian dance suggest.

Indian culture is based on spiritualism and as dance forms an integral part of Indian culture, it involves spiritual experiences thereby transforming oneself to the seventh heaven. These experiences include horripilations, incessant crying, internal vibrations etc, which suggest complete involvement of the dancer. The message conveyed through such experiences is that every object, whether animate or inanimate, is considered to be a fragment of the Supreme Being and when both the souls merge, the former attains, what in the Hindu terminology is Moksha or salvation. Hence dance is a logical way to attain salvation. The logic herein involved is that while dancing the

dancer gets transformed from the material world to a deeply spiritual world thereby communicating with celestial beings. It is exactly the same in chemical sciences where atoms migrate from the ground state to an excited state to achieve conjugation. Indian dance deals with gods and thus the dancer feels one with the gods, undergoing this process of transformation.

This transformation occurs very slowly but spontaneously. As the dancer enters the platform of dance, with slow pulsating movements, the enchanting music accompanying it, shuts all communions with the outside world, thereby creating a different world altogether. Now the dancer enters a slow and smooth passage through the road to heaven, a state of bliss. On the way the dancer undergoes several mystical experiences. During this time one observes divine effulgence in the body of the dancer when the latter is undergoing such a

process of transformation. Finally the dancer attains Samadhi i.e. a state in which the body metabolism stops completely but the person is still alive. Great Indian mystics have mentioned about this stage in which the soul becomes one with God. During the dance, the dancer prays to the divine spirit with the following words:

"Oh Lord! From the unreal lead me to the real,

From darkness lead me to light, from death lead me to immortality."

This is that dance, its deepest significance is felt when it is realized that it takes place within the heart and the self. Everywhere is God. Using this context, there is complete internalization of the subject, and the dancer, quite oblivious of the external surrounding, becomes one with the dance. This is the dance of enlightenment.

During this whole process of transformation that one undergoes, the dancer is changed as a person too. One becomes more disciplined, because such experiences require a long and thorough preparation with complete dedication. The person starts observing things differently. In everything one feels the presence of supernatural vibrations and sees a divine brightness everywhere. No matter what one does, the dancer is always in a state of ecstasy. This is a stage of Bhakti or complete surrender to the Supreme Being. Wherever the mind goes, there it experiences Samadhi, for it does not find an object of enjoyment. God is filling every speck of space. The whole world is clothed with the glory of god. The saint and the sinner, the virtuous and the vicious, the good and the bad, the man and the animal, all are forms of god. There is no question of the mind dealing with them in an undivine way.

Here the mind too undergoes a gradual transformational process. The mind experiences Samadhi. The mind has consciousness. But it has no object. This is the condition of Samadhi that is thoughtless consciousness and objectless knowledge. Slowly objective consciousness dies when the presence of god is felt everywhere. The sense objects are transformed into the glory of divinity.

Such is the transformational power of dance that it changes an ordinary mortal into a self-attained entity.

Author's note: I am greatly indebted to Prof. Dr. D.P Dash, Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar for his wonderful ideas about how to write an article. I have also been greatly inspired by "The Tao of Physics" by Fritjof Capra



Rahul Acharya

"...and a time to dance" (Eccles 3:4)

An Autobiographical Reflection on Dance as Transformation

Greg Smith, Parish Priest of Christ Anglican Church, London, Ontario, Canada.

Many of us in North America grow up feeling encased in this stranger we call a "body". We know the body to be the experiential place of our feeling senses, and yet we have been raised to believe that so many of those things we feel and sense are not good or, at the very best, are not to be mentioned. Our bodies give us desires and drives and sensuality that our culture has taught us are things that need to be tempered and controlled and, sometimes, repressed completely for the comfort and well-being of those around. What are we to make of this body then? What are we to do with it when it wants us to be and do things we think we ought not? The body seems alien; even an enemy. Should we disguise it, bind it? Perhaps we should kill it completely.

As I grew into adulthood and what I took for manhood, I was aware that my body wanted to move in directions that made me afraid. My body wanted to jump and spin. It wanted to be graceful and express itself. It wanted to be sensual and alive to other bodies around it. But, good heavens! What would people think? What would they say? And worse, what would they come to know about me? It was safer to keep still. It pleased everyone to keep the body in submission. I became a priest in the Anglican tradition. As one who had only experienced a sort of Irish Protestant version of Anglicanism here in southwestern Ontario, it came as a secret delight during my training to discover that one could, in fact, don swishy, flowing garments and move about gesturing dramatically and gracefully with the arms in the context of liturgy, and be judged only as an "expressive celebrant" or "a spiritual man". It was really the exploration of rudimentary choreography- speaking belief and conviction through the body and evoking deeper, visceral reactions and emotions from those who watched.

Still, when Adrienne came to me, just after I had arrived in my fourth parish, to tell me that she had invited Anna to come on a Saturday morning to lead anyone who came in "Moving the Psalms"?, I felt the dutiful call of repression. But it was already planned and happening. I should go and make sure that nothing irreverent or heretical was going on. That was the job of a parish priest after all. Come Saturday, I went with much haughty foreboding. I sat, I listened and - who knows what came over me (Divine Spirit perhaps?) - I found myself hearing the words of the psalms and feeling them echoing through my body, tin-

gling my skin, enlivening my muscles and opening my heart. I was deeply afraid that someone might have noticed.

Two days later came a phone call. It was Anna. Her dance company was working on an interesting piece - a performance of a story about a girl born with wings, whose wings are bound for her by her parents wanting to protect her, but who one night comes to own her wings and lifts off the ground in flight. Anna had noticed, she said, that I seemed to move comfortably and rhythmically and they needed a male dancer. Would I consider joining them, just for this time? After searching for all the reasons to deny it, repress it, kill it...I said, "Okay. Just this once."

Twelve years and many dances later both on performance stages and in the context of liturgy, I am able to call myself "a dancer". I have danced the Missa Gaia in a Roman Catholic basilica and the Blessing of Animals in the Anglican Cathedral. I have taken workshops in forms as challenging as Katharine Dunham technique and Flamenco, with the joy of fantasy fulfilled. I have danced at the funerals of two dear friends and mentors. I even found myself one evening in the summer of 2003 in an auditorium at Scripps College in Southern California, performing in front of the Sacred Dance Guild Festival, a solo piece I had choreographed and dedicated to Anna. In

all those years in between, a gradual healing has taken place bringing me home to my body - to know it as a friend, as a lover of who I am. Coming home to my body - to myself, and so coming for the first time honestly face to face with God - has been hard and sometimes very painful, not only for me but for others closest to me. I have faced debilitating anxiety, burnout and vocational crisis as long held tensions were exposed. I have had to face the end of relationship, primarily in the ending of a marriage in the aftermath of honesty. And I face the shattering realization that I have left it all so long that, at 50, it sometimes feels too late.

The pain for others I regret and seek for penance and yet, would that we had never been taught to despise the truths of our bodies in the beginning so that the journey back would not be necessary, accompanied as it is by all the shocks and hurts and feelings of betrayal and loss when finally we are free to say: "This is who I am and I have to use my wings!"

Dance is a gift of God's transforming love. It is a sacred meeting place of all that we are - body, mind, and spirit. I shall always be thankful to God and to the two guardian angels, Adrienne and Anna, who both now dance in the celestial circle around the eternal banquet.

Special Notice to Guild Members....

Starfire was loved by many in the Guild. And she loved the Guild. In the last few weeks of her time on Earth with us, she chose to demonstrate her love for us in a special way. She had been told of my Development Director "tongue-in-cheek" request at the last Annual Meeting for donations of jewelry to the Guild because, of course, we all know that "*Diamonds Are a Guild's Best Friend!*" One day shortly before she left us to begin the great cosmic dance, a small package arrived at my door. As one of her last acts here, in keeping with her always generous and caring spirit, she had donated a beautiful diamond ring to the Guild!

The ring was appraised at \$3,500. We've learned that only a very small percentage of that value, at the most, would be realized by arrangement for resale through a jeweler. Jewelers who deal in resale of jewelry are essentially pawn brokers. The members of the Board felt that there may well be Guild members who would cherish having this memento of Starfire, and would be willing to make a contribution to the Guild, rather than letting it be sold to a stranger for a minimal amount. If this is something you would like to consider, please write, email, or call me -- Kathryn Mihelick, 2292 Lynnwood Drive, Stow, OH 44224; phone, 330-688-8806; email leaven.km@juno.com.

Many Faiths, Many Forms, Dancing the Sacred Together

Continued on page 8

vide a list with names, addresses and price ranges!

There is limited housing available at Pacific School of Religion and some of the other seminaries located in the several blocks near PSR, and there are also nearby bed and breakfasts and a monastery with beautiful views! And, of course, hotels. We have a list of possible housing on our website and available by mail (see contact information below). Unfortunately we are not be able to make the housing arrangements for you, but we have provided a place on our website where you can post your needs for roommates, rides, etc. and hopefully make some contacts that will work for you.

Fees: Sacred Dance Guild members can attend the entire Mini-Festival for \$150 if they pre-register. Non-member

pre-registration fee is \$190. We are anxious to encourage young people to get involved in the Guild so are offering a special fee of only \$50 (pre-registration) for young people under 18. They must, of course, be accompanied by an adult. There are also fees for daily attendance. See our website, or contact Connie Tyler, for full fee information.

Contact Information: Go to www.sacreddanceguild.org and click on Festivals, then on MiniFestivals 2004 and then on Northern California for the most up to date information and registration forms. You can also write, email or call Connie Tyler for a registration packet. Her contact information is: Connie Tyler, 2322 8th Street, Berkeley, CA 94710, connie@deephum.com, 510-849-0788.

Hope you all can come!



**Mary Jane Wolbers
and Kat Pettycrew at
the Mid-Atlantic
Mini-Festival,
Alexandria, Virginia,
July 16-18, 2004.**

Photo by Mae Moore

Mid-Atlantic Festival 2004 Update

The Mid-Atlantic Mini-Festival 2004, co-sponsored by the Potomac and Constitution Chapters of the SDG, was held July 16-18 at Episcopal High School, in Alexandria, Virginia. It was a fantastic weekend. As well as offering Choreography-to-Go classes and other delectable learning experiences (Interplay, Composition, NIA, Modern Technique, working with children), we offered a special Children's Track (including Hip-Hop, Praise dancing, banners and streamers), TalkShop seminars, exhibits and displays and, of course, the fellowship of other sacred dancers. Saturday culminated in an exciting, truly interfaith concert in the lovely Chapel of the Episcopal High in Alexandria. (Those of you who attended National Festival 1992 will re-

member it.) Then we finished off the weekend with a lovely sharing Closing Ceremony that sent everyone away even more appreciative of the role sacred dance can play in any kind of worship setting. Reasonable room and board were available right at Episcopal High School. We were pleased to have Star Styled as our Festival Sponsor and wish to thank them!

The SDG's Annual Membership Meeting was held at this Mini-Festival. The Mid-Atlantic Festival Committee worked their tail-feathers off over four states to pull off this mini-festival, and those feathers waved proudly in the Sacred Dance Guild's cap this summer!

*Kathlene Pettycrew
Mid-Atlantic Festival Co-PR Director
Constitution Chapter Representative*

RECOMMENDED READING/VIEWING

Dance & Devotion

Written and compiled by Malathi Iyengar, M.F.A., Illustrated by Suresh Iyengar

At a time when people around the world see arts as one of the highest forms of leverage to enhance society, Malathi Iyengar continues the tradition of creating and exploring new territories with the launch of *Dance & Devotion: A Hand Book on Bharatanatyam dance and Traditional Prayers* for students pursuing Indian Classical Dance.

Congratulations

Congratulations are in order for Doug Adams. His Center for the Arts, Religion, and Education (CARE) awarded its first Speciality Certificate in Sacred Dance, which students may earn as part of their degree work at the seminaries of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley.

RECIPROCAL AFFILIATIONS

The Sacred Dance Guild has collegial status with the following organizations: This is a reciprocal agreement whereby members of the Guild may attend activities of these organizations at the same fee their own members pay (proof of SDG membership is required). Members of these organizations may attend Guild activities in the same way.

American Dance Guild, P. O. Box 2006, Lenox Hill Station, New York, NY 10021 (212) 932-2789.

International Liturgical Dance Association (ILDA) of NPM (National Association of Pastoral Musicians), 3215 Bellacre Court, Cincinnati, OH 45248-5005 (513) 451-6746.

National Dance Association, American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1900 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091 (703) 476-3436.

Exchanges

The Sacred Dance Guild is exchanging Newsletters and Journals with the following international members of the World Dance Alliance:

Congress on Research in Dance (CORD) dance and the Child International (daCI)

Dance Notation Bureau
International Council of Kinetography Laban (ICKL)

International Council for Traditional Music, Ethnochoreology

Imperial Society of Teachers in Dancing
International Organization of Transition for Professional Dancers

International Dance Committee of ITI/ UNESCO

Laban Institute for Movement Studies, Laban/Bartenieff Institute

Society of Dance History Scholars

WDA Americas

WDA Asia Pacific

YOUTH YAK

A focus on dancing with children and youth is essential if sacred dance is to continue beyond those of us whose knees are creaking, and whose leaps are not as grand as they once were. Margaret Taylor-Doane has long been aware of this. I took a joyous children and dance workshop with her in 1983 at my first SDG Festival, and subsequently bought her book Dramatic Dance with Children in Education and Worship, published in 1977. Her ideas are not outdated, but rather invite the reader to use them, and experiment with adaptations. Her understanding of the working of a child's mind with its lower threshold for inhibitions and its penchant for exploration are key to her suggestions and choreography.

Rooted in her Christian tradition, Margaret divides the book into three sections according to ages: five through seven, eight and nine, ten and eleven. With sensitivity towards children's maturation levels, and comprehension of structured worship, each section is rich with suggestions for both educational and worship settings. Because all three sections include Christmas ideas, this would be an ideal resource for a December event in a Catholic, Orthodox or Protestant setting.

Margaret, a true SDG mother, has written many other books, and has been previously featured in the Journal. Currently in her nineties, she lives in Spokane, Washington, and at last report is still giving workshops, introducing the child in us all to the wonders of dramatic and creative dance. Her books can be ordered from The Sharing Company, 6226 Bernhard Ave., Richmond, CA 94805.



Photo by Mary Jane Wolbers

Therese Gerlach and her daughter Shanna, age 6, at the closing ceremony of the SDG Mid Atlantic Festival.

Cross-Cultural Concerns in Sacred Dance Choreography

By Mary Jane Wolbers

We live in a religiously plural world. The number of religions (organized and many not-so-organized) is large. To be a full participant in the human family requires knowledge of and compassion for the varieties of experience that exist in our world. We cannot ignore practices and beliefs that differ from our own.

Reaching out to others is fundamental to understanding human interrelationships and interdependence. It is paramount to our search for personal fulfillment and the world's resounding plea for peace. It is the key to becoming truly human beings, and to the achievement of "a society of friendly people underneath a friendly sky" of which Dr. Howard Thurman wrote.*

A study of comparative religions reveals both similarities and differences between cultural groups on this earthly planet. In the beginning, all peoples danced their faith. Many cultures continue to do so, and individuals dance their personal prayers.

There is a growing recognition of the need for expression that transcends the boundaries of verbal language, denominationalism, color, gender and age. Dance gives a special and incomparable relevancy to human experience. A resurgence of interest and practice in dance as a religious art form is noted, especially in Western Christian churches.

The Sacred Dance Guild is to be commended as an international, interfaith organization. Its programs welcome and promote a global focus for dance as a religious art form. Sacred dances based on what I call "universal concerns" are increasingly noted in the repertoires of solo artists and dance choirs. Examples of the concerns are:

The Golden Rule (see right column)

Peace
Celebration
Compassion
Trust
Grief and Loss
Prayers

These, and innumerable others, expand possibilities for choreographic de-

velopment beyond the limits of a specific liturgy. Such works can be presented in a variety of settings, on many different occasions. They are "multipurpose" and find acceptance in situations that would preclude the performance of typical sacred dances because of the "separation of church and state" or the dictum of a given community.

*"Any person conversant with the history of religions is well acquainted with the role of dance in worship. The significance of this role is to be found, in part, in the subtleties of rhythm and bodily movement as vehicles for the releasing of the human spirit. Historically, the act of worship provides a transcendent point of focus for such release."

"Because the genius of the dance, certainly in its more liturgical aspects, is to effect a creative synthesis of body, mind and spirit in a single respiratory beat, the significance of such an experience for the community is not far to seek. Beset by fears and anxieties, with the senses of direction for the common life obscured by the deep shadows of heavy forebodings, modern man is desperately in need of experiences that make for wholeness, for synthesis, and therefore validation. The dance provides that kind of integrating moment which may enable the human spirit to catch its breath in the struggle to achieve a friendly society of people underneath a friendly sky."

Dr. Howard W. Thurman (1899-1981)

The Golden Rule

Brahmanism: This is the sum of duty: Do naught unto others which would cause you pain if done to you.

Buddhism: Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.

Confucianism: Surely it is the maxim of loving-kindness: Do not unto others what you would not have them do unto you.

Taoism: Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain, and your neighbor's loss as your own.

Zoroastrianism: That nature alone is good which refrains from doing unto another whatsoever is not good for itself.

Judaism: What is hateful to you, do not to your fellowman. That is the entire Law; all the rest is commentary.

Christianity: All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Islam: No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.

Advertise in the SDG Journal

Ad per ONE (1) issue
One-half page.....\$100.00
One-quarter page.....60.00
One-eighth or business card.....40.00

Ad per THREE (3) issues
One-half page.....\$275.00
One-quarter page.....150.00
One-eighth or business card.....95.00

Classified Ads and Personals
1-10 words.....5.00
11-20 words.....8.00
21-30 words.....13.00
31-40 words.....17.00

DANCING OUR ROOTS...STRETCHING NEW BRANCHES FESTIVAL 2005, CONNECTICUT COLLEGE.....JULY 21-26, 2005

Dear Sacred Dancers,

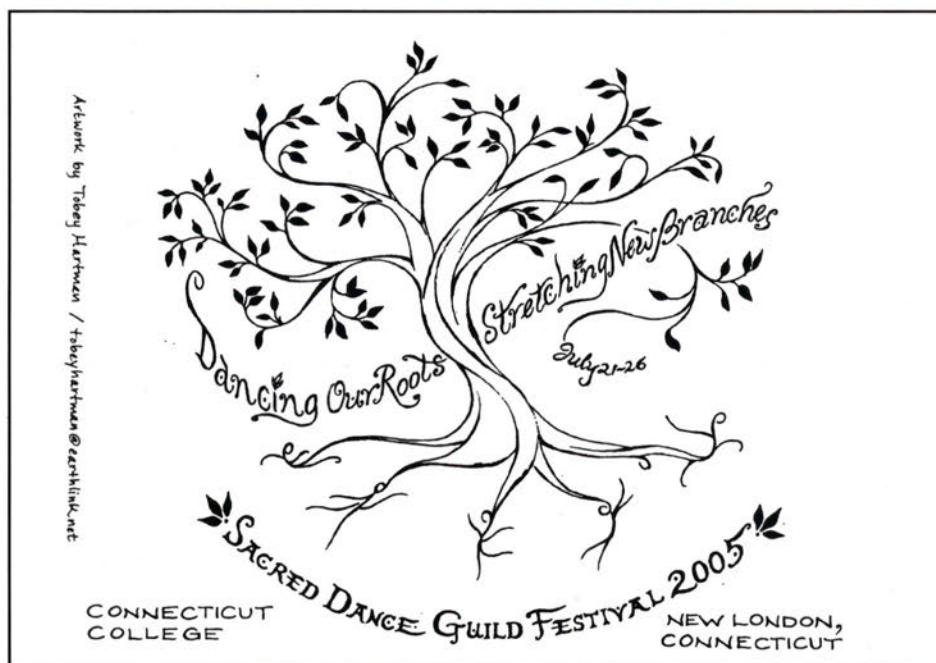
It is my pleasure to update you on the progress for Festival 2005-*Dancing Our Roots...Stretching New Branches*. It will be held at Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut July 21-26. It is a beautiful site set high on a hill overlooking Long Island Sound. It is located between New York City and Boston. Connecticut College has a long association with dance and offers a major in Dance and Choreography. There are wonderful studios and other spaces where we will dance! Your attendance at this festival will give you opportunities to meet other Sacred Dancers. Please note the introductions for the faculty members, so artfully described by Lucy Knopf and the lively festival logo designed by Tobey Hartman in the *Journal*.

Our team members expect to be busy this year with all the myriad tasks that every successful festival includes. What you can do is SAVE THE DATE! Plan to be with people of different faiths and cultures who come together to create new shared experiences! You will be enriched by this immersion and leave with something special that will enhance your own creative journey. We welcome your input in all ways. Finally, and most importantly, we ask you to keep envisioning this festival and hold it and everyone involved in your thoughts and prayers!

If you can be involved in the preparation, please contact me by e-mail at sdgpeg@sbcglobal.net, by phone at 203 483-1201 or by mail at 10 Elinor Place, Branford, CT 06405.

With gratitude for what has been created and excitement for what is to come!

Peggy Arthur, Festival 2005 Coordinator



The Sacred Dance Guild has a tradition of respecting and remembering all those who have led the way in making the Guild possible. The Guild is also always open to the new and possible. These attributes are the themes of Festival 2005, and are wonderfully dramatized in an exciting and talented group of presenters.

Recalling the roots of modern dance is lifetime Sacred Dance Guild member, dancer, choreographer and teacher the legendary Mary Anthony. She will be at Festival leading Master Classes.

Continuing to capture our dance heritage will be Jeanne Bresciani's "Sacred Core of Modern Dance." Ms. Bresciani will perform and teach the art of Isadora Duncan. Some dance historians credit Isadora Duncan with having started the phenomenon called Modern Dance.

Other main presenters, new to Festival but well known in their own fields, represent a wide variety of dance experiences. Their presence at Festival expresses SDG's multicultural interfaith commitment.

Internationally known Chen Yu Tsuei, native of Taiwan and Juilliard graduate, will teach Chinese Cultural Dancing. Brazilian Alesh du Carmo, performance artist and New School faculty member, brings us Afro-Latin dance. Judith Rose, versatile artist specializes in "Otiyot Khayyot ...Sacred Hebrew Letter Movement Practice," and Mary Christine O'Connor-Thomsen, cantor, choreographer and well known for her work as pastoral associate in one of New York City's busiest parishes, will teach her unique understanding of

Liturgical Dance based on the Ancient Liturgy of the Hours.

Among Morning Warm-up presenters is Mary Kasakove, known for her rehabilitative Pilates work with many celebrated ballet performers. Her work is mentioned in "The Dancers' Body Book."

Another feature of Festival 2005 is a daily Technique class which will include modern and jazz.

L'Ana Burton and Jolyn Walker, popular for their work with youngsters, will headline Youth Day.

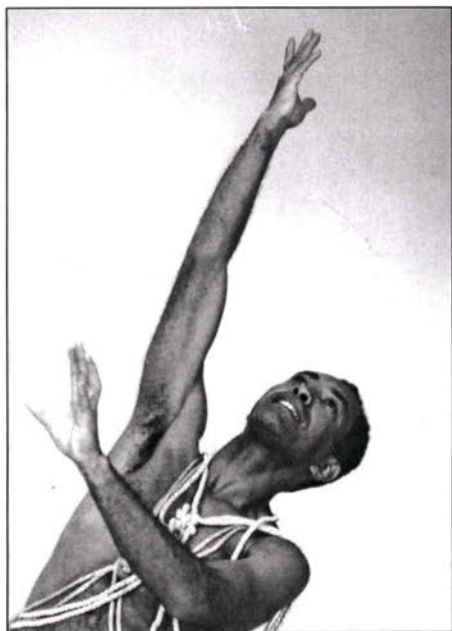
And that's only the beginning. Afternoon workshops and evening events include Praise and African Dance, Hip Hop Fusion, Belly Dancing, Body Prayer, Sign and Dance, Working with Props and much much more.

Connecticut College has a remarkable place in Modern Dance History. It was the home of the American Dance Festival from 1946-1976. All the "greats" that the modern dance world now considers its founding mothers and fathers: Martha Graham, Jose Limon, Eric Hawkins, Arthur Mitchell, Merce Cunningham were part of the American Dance Festival. In fact, it is difficult to name a well known modern dancer and teacher who did not appear at Connecticut College during those years.

Today Connecticut College continues to offer a major in dance performance and choreography. The current department chair is Professor Lan-Lan Wang.

Festival 2005 is still in the planning stages, so stay tuned !!!

Lucy Knopf



Alesh du Carmo

Mark Your Calendars

NATIONAL DANCE WEEK 2005 is April 23 – May 1

INTERNATIONAL DANCE DAY 2005 is April 29, 2005

Okay, so you think April 2005 is a little far away to be worrying about already. That depends on how far you want to spread the word that sacred dance actually exists!!!!

Since 1981, the National Dance Week organization (<http://www.nationaldanceweek.org/>) has been sponsoring National Dance Week across the nation, usually during the last week or so of April. Sacred dance is usually a forgotten facet of this celebration, and it's up to us to let the world know we're out there.

On April 11, 2002, President George Bush issued a Letter of Commendation to the National Dance Week organization recognizing National Dance Week. One phrase of the letter stands out: "Dancing's unique ability to communicate ideas and feelings has been part of the American cultural tradition since our founding." (George W. Bush) How much truer is this for sacred dance, and how much more a part of world culture?

Festival 2005 Presenter



Photo by Lois Greenfield
Jeanne Bresciani

About the Festival 2005 Logo Artist

Tobey Hartman is an artist and graphic designer living in New York City. She has created textile art for Nicole Miller, gift art for stationery stores nationwide; illustrations for publications such as the Parkinson's Disease Foundation newsletter; brochures, logos, and greeting cards for a variety of clients. She also designs books and educational materials for the New York City Department of Education.

She is pleased to have had her logo selected to represent the Sacred Dance Guild Festival 2005. She may be reached at tobeyhartman@earthlink.net.

"Dance is the original most ancient form of human expression. Through the body and physical language, dance has a powerful connection with the emotional and spiritual worlds." (Stephen Page – ITI/UNESCO)

"But all I want to do is *dance!*" you moan. So DANCE! You just need to dance in public for this *one week*. Outside your church, temple, synagogue or divine circle. Those of you in major metropolitan areas? Show up at the studios of your local morning show or evening news broadcast and dance, whether they invited you or not! Cameras love live acts. (Although an invitation is much nicer and more politically correct! Not to mention gets you more air time!) Have a prepared statement ready too.

So you live in Cedar Brook, NJ or What Cheer, IA? (Yes, my friends, What Cheer is a real town in Iowa.) There are very few towns today that don't have a newspaper. If you dance in a town, that town has a newspaper that needs a story, preferably with a picture. Write down your dance history, have your best friend take an action photo (in case your paper's photographer is out doing the local pet fair that day), throw in a blurb about the SDG and National Dance Week, and present it, ready made, to your editor, preferably in person, with sad puppy dog eyes. Presence is everything in small towns. If he is your relative's relative, apply a little family pressure. Political pressure works well in larger towns. (Remember though: Media needs lead time. Please allow 4-6 weeks for TV; 3-4 weeks for radio; and 2-4 weeks for local print. And if you don't like writing, someone in the Guild will be more than glad to help you. Try your Chapter Rep or your Resource Director.)

The whole purpose here, dancers, is to get the message out there that sacred dance exists, and it exists for many purposes. Sacred dance can be a personal path for prayer and expression; an adjunct to liturgy; a ministry both inside and out of the established church; a connection between peoples that don't share a language or cultural experiences. And it's an art. National Dance Week was established originally to celebrate the ART of dance across America. We can carry our ART to another plane. Many of us have technical backgrounds; some of us only have expressive backgrounds and still tie strings around our left wrists, but we all dance, and in an SDG dancer's life, we dance for the sacred. Please let us use National Dance Week 2005 to share that with our fellow dancers, and with the world.

"The 'grass root' aspect of NDW con-

tinues to the present and is, in fact, largely the reason for the tremendous growth the annual celebration has seen over the years. A volunteer work force is made up of NDW delegates from all facets of the dance world, teachers to performers, students to community leaders, choreographers to journalists, businessmen and women to dance enthusiasts. Events number in the thousands during the week-long observation every year from the national Kickoff events in major cities to local showcases at small town malls. The vast assortment of observations vary largely and are limited only by the creative abilities of those who participate.

UDMA's sponsorship of NDW brings together people of the varied fields within the dance community across the United States. Together, all work to heighten the public appreciation for the art of dance and gain recognition for its contributions to our society. This continued partnership is both viable and strengthened by all who join in their common cause.

The National Dance Week Mission Statement has been determined to heighten the awareness of Dance and its contributions to our culture. Dance is good for the mind, body and spirit." (National Dance Week website History page)

I would like to think it is part of my responsibility, or rather, my ministry, as a sacred dancer, to help the National Dance Week Organization to further their goals, and to make sure that the SDG is a larger and larger part of that organization. The application form for 2005 delegates, directors, etc. is available online now, even if all you want to do is be responsible for forwarding press releases to your local newspapers. It all helps. But it's time SACRED dance quit being the forgotten child of the arts.

By the way, did you know that there is an *International Dance Week* too? It is centered around International Dance Day, April 29th of each year. It was started in 1982 by the International Theatre Institute Committee of UNESCO (<http://iti.unesco.org/pages/idd/idd.htm>). Wouldn't it be spectacular if some of the SDG could come up with a piece of choreography that we could all dance at the same time (Greenwich Mean Time) on that day to celebrate? Like Earthdance does each year - this year on September 18. (See their website for Earthdance 2004 at <http://www.earthdance.org>.) Anybody volunteering?

visit the SDG website
www.sacreddanceguild.org

MEMOS FROM THE MINUTES

Note: copies of reports filed at Board Meetings are available to members by request to the Recording Secretary.

Executive Board Meeting, April 16-17, 2004, New Haven, CT

Abbreviated minutes; the full minutes were approved by the Board by email vote completed June 28, 2004.

Board Members Present: Karen Josephson, President; Kat Pettycrew, Vice President and acting Resources Director; Jolyn Walker, Treasurer (Saturday only); Ellen Roberts Young, Recording Secretary; Lucy Knopf, Corresponding Secretary; Connie Tyler, Membership Director; Kathryn Mihelick, Development Director; Wendy Morrell, Public Relations Director; Pat Bowen, SP Governance Team, proxy for Merle Wade, Rosalie Branigan. **Guests:** Peggy Arthur, Festival 2005 Chair, Friday evening; Mark Dollhopf, Fundraising consultant, Saturday morning

After checking in around the dinner table, President Karen Josephson called the business part of the meeting to order Friday evening at 7:50 p.m. She shared correspondence.

Email motions since previous meeting: 1) New signers were approved for all Guild accounts: Jolyn Walker, Ellen Roberts Young, Susan S. Y. Johnson, and Karen Josephson. 2) The Board approved a special mailing to past members, with an offer to attend minifestivals at member rates if they become members for the 2005 membership year.

Kathryn Mihelick moved, Lucy Knopf seconded, **that the reports of the President, Vice President, Corresponding Secretary, Membership Director, Chapters and Regions Director, Public Relations Director and Program Director be accepted as distributed.** One correction was noted: the Vice President's report should refer to the policies, not by-laws. **Carried, with the correction.**

Festivals - 2005: Peggy Arthur distributed documents relating to Festival 2005. She described the Connecticut College facilities, which offer five dance spaces including the performance hall. Shirley Blancke and Joyce Smillie will be registrars and will use the Guild's online database. Peggy noted that more workers are needed to head up publicity, hospitality, faculty concert and the banquet. She was advised to seek people outside the Guild for some of these, including college students.

2004: Louisiana and Ohio/Penn have held their festivals, which were very different. Louisiana drew 100 people; Oh/Penn's was more like a retreat with 15. In conversation about doing this again in 2006 or 2007, it was noted that there should be specific invitations to new locations, and that a Board member should probably be assigned to each. Kat Pettycrew reported that no one had asked for the manual she put together. She urged that there be "after-market" PR to further spread the word.

2006, 2007: The Board expressed consensus that one of those years should have an International Festival. Karen agreed to ask Rosalie to contact several chapters and regions and invite them to build on their Mini-festival experience. Connie Tyler agreed to sound out Northern California for 2007.

2008: Karen Josephson reported a letter from Mary Jane Wolbers suggesting that Jacob's Pillow would not accommodate an outside group during their season, but might be amenable to using some sacred dance people and some cooperative events. Mary Jane recommends using Simon's Rock, Bard College as a base for this festival. Karen and Elaine Sisler will follow up on this. Wendy Morrell shared the presentation booklet she has put together about the Guild for projects such as this.

Governance - Pat Bowen gave a power point presentation summarizing the work so far and the proposal for a new structure from the Governance

Team of the Strategic Planning Process. A discussion followed clarifying specific points, particularly regarding the new concept of regions and issues of dues and expenses.

Kathryn Mihelick moved, Lucy Knopf seconded, **that the Executive Board accept the plan in principle as a guide and ask the Governance Team to continue to refine it with input from Board members and the general membership.** Carried. Ellen Young agreed to put a short version of the revised proposal on the web.

President Karen Josephson called the meeting back to order on Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m. She shared magazines and other correspondence. She raised the possibility of exchanging publications with dance magazines. Lucy Knopf moved, Jolyn Walker seconded **that the Guild develop an exchange program with appropriate publications, to be reevaluated after two years.** Carried.

The Directory was discussed, with agreement that it looks better this year. Thanks were expressed to Connie Tyler and Fran Becque for their work. Connie suggested to the Board that in future the current arrangement should be reversed with the full listings in alphabetical order, with an index to chapters and regions. She noted that this booklet is really our handbook for new members and should be developed as such.

Brochure - Wendy Morrell went through a list of questions about the brochure. The Board approved the current size by consensus. Recommendations for change included: add mailing preference, list membership director, not resource director, among key addresses, separate lines for student and senior memberships.

Discussion with Mark Dollhopf - Mark Dollhopf, who has some 25 years experience in the Development field, much of it with churches and arts groups, spent almost two hours with the board, asking the members to think through our mission, our outreach and our resources. His points included:

Board members must give some treasure as well as time and talent. Typically a Board is responsible for obtaining 40% of donations.

We need to decide whether we are a club (association geared toward its members) or an organization which offers something that changes lives.

We should build in profits in our event budgeting to pay for other activities.

We need to take risks. If we sit on our endowment funds we will die. The process of broadening our reach could be aided by clerical staffing, but it does not work to hire a development person first, and one should never ask such a person to earn their salary. Mark noted that with clerical staff the contract should be very specific - and it should be contract work, not an employee situation.

We need to develop a case for support - examples of changed lives, criteria and measurement.

Grant writing is a long term process: getting the first application out is only the beginning. Personal contact is needed.

We should think of concentric circles of givers, with the Board as the center.

We (the Board) should set an example by putting the Guild in our wills.

Comments from Board members expressed our mission in different ways: making dance as common as music in worship, sharing dance as peacemaking, anti-violence activity and community building, serving professionals and non-professionals.

In conclusion, Mark summarized what we need to do as follows: 1) demonstrate how we change lives. 2) figure out how much money we need to do what in

order to carry on our mission. 3) challenge the Board 4) choose techniques to gain the support we need.

Publications - Karen Josephson reviewed the current process for producing the Journal. Toni types everything in, then sends it to Mark Moloney, who reviews it and goes over it with her by phone. It then goes to Fran Becque for layout and then to the printer. Lucy Knopf moved, Jolyn Walker seconded **that all publication documents must be reviewed by the President before dissemination.** This includes the appeal letter (as is already done), and other communications. **Carried.**

Wendy Morrell presented her draft Terms of Reference for the Journal Editorial Committee. After discussion, Connie Tyler moved, Kathryn Mihelick seconded, **that the Terms of Reference be accepted as revised.** Carried. Connie will set up an email address to which submissions can be sent: journal@sacreddanceguild.org. She will also set up a location which all committee members can access to edit documents. Karen will communicate with Toni Intravaia and Fran Becque about the new arrangements and get a notice in the Journal currently going to press.

Strategic Planning process and resumed discussion of Governance proposal. - Wendy Morrell reviewed her Terms of Reference for the Strategic Planning Teams. She noted that the greatest immediate need is for finance work. There are several people to work on this Team, but no leader. Kathryn Mihelick and Jolyn Walker agreed to co-consult with this team. Wendy suggested that Board members should talk up the process at mini-festivals. Kathryn Mihelick moved, Ellen Young seconded, **that the Board accept the Terms of Reference for the Strategic Planning Process.** Carried.

Board members were invited to review the specifics of the Governance Proposal. Several clarifications were made - notably that while each committee will propose and maintain relevant policies, the Board of Directors as a whole would have the responsibility of approving them.

Pat Bowen proposed that the Strategic Planning teams be seen as a trial of the new structure. After considerable discussion for clarification, Kathryn Mihelick moved, Kat Pettycrew seconded, **that the Strategic Planning Teams, as they come into operation, be structured as a model for implementing portions of the proposed structure.** Carried with two abstentions by members who found this still unclear. Karen suggested that the Journal committee should also be watched as a similar model.

Karen Josephson asked for thoughts about how some shifts might be made this year in the proposed direction. One suggestion was that Merle develop her subcommittee with an eye to splitting the Chapters and Regions responsibilities. Karen proposed that we use the option to create one additional director to put in place a Web Director.

Financial Matters - Jolyn Walker distributed copies of the Treasurer's report. Connie Tyler moved, Kathryn Mihelick, **that the Treasurer's report be accepted.** Carried. Ellen Young pointed out that the budget had only been provisionally accepted last July. Kathryn Mihelick moved, Kat Pettycrew seconded, **that the budget for FYE 2004 be approved.** Carried.

For next year's budget, Ellen Young moved, Wendy Morrell seconded, **that the Directory expenses be given a separate line.** Carried.

Appeal money: In response to Mark Dollhopf's presentation, the Board came to consensus that the Board should be solicited for contributions in October, before the appeal letter goes out. One suggestion for giving was that people who are paid for their programs might consider tithing them to support the Guild.

Continued on page 13

Chapters and Regions News - Restructuring Revisited

Hello dear dancers,

During these final 12 months of my tenure as chapters and regions director I shall take more time to reflect on the splendid achievements and accomplishments of the hundreds of you who have persevered and have helped to move the Guild toward positive changes.

Thus far, six mini-festivals have taken place, have greatly contributed to an enhanced dance community and have impacted the lives of hundreds of individual participants. Doors have been opened, information disseminated and opportunities to do even greater feats have been presented. The Guild cannot measure its success by festivals and mini-festivals alone, but most definitely by the dynamic and significant spirit and fortitude of all of its members. What each of us do has a rippling effect on future generations of sacred dancers. Now, as we continue to attempt to fulfill the Divine's mission for our lives, let us look to new beginnings.

Memos from the Minutes

Continued from page 12
Need for Staff - As follow up to the Governance Proposal, Pat Bowen and Ellen Young presented a proposal from Peggy Hoffman of Mariner Management and Marketing to provide clerical services in the financial and membership areas to the Guild. The proposal for \$750 per month represents a \$6500 increase over the \$2500 currently paid for book-keeping. In order to make an intelligent decision the following steps were agreed upon: Connie Tyler and Kathryn Mihelick will get proposals from others, although the one Kathryn gets will probably be for comparative purposes only, and Peggy will be contacted to clarify how much of the charge she offers is for the bookkeeping. Kathryn Mihelick moved, Jolyn Walker seconded, that proposals will be requested by May 15 and distributed to the Board, which will vote in the last week in May, so that a contract can be put in place for the 2004-2005 fiscal year. Carried. [Note: this process was completed in June, 2004, with the hiring of Mariner Management to provide secretarial services.]

When the meeting was adjourned, the Board members went out on Karen's deck to dance.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Roberts Young, Recording Secretary

Annual Membership Meeting of the Sacred Dance Guild, July 17, 2004, Virginia Theological Seminary Refectory, Alexandria, VA

Note: These are draft minutes which will be approved at the next Annual Membership Meeting, July, 2005, in New London, CT.

President Karen Josephson gathered Guild members together in the lobby outside the Seminary refectory at a few minutes after 1:00 p.m.

Copies of the minutes of the 2003 Annual Membership Meeting were circulated. Sally Moravitz moved, Ann Pomery seconded, that the minutes be approved as distributed.

In the absence of the Treasurer, Recording Secretary Ellen Young gave the Treasurer's report, including the current balance in all accounts, \$92,174, and the deficit budget approved by the Executive Board at their meeting on July 15.

Sally Moravitz, chair of the Nominating Committee, distributed ballots to those who had not sent them in. She noted the error in the ballot: the position Kat Pettycrew was nominated for is Resources Director.

Karen Josephson recognized the two Directors at Large present, Tamara Mingo and Dana Schlegel, and

The teaching I ask you to accept is easy; the load I give you to carry is light.

(Matthew 11:30)

The Sacred Dance Guild membership survey set the stage for the very successful strategic planning meeting, held in Claremont, California. Your questions, comments and responses paved the way to formulate working committees across the country and in Canada. Since the summer of 2003, the Guild has been embarking on new horizons and new trails. We've chosen not to focus on the obstacles that may lay in wait and/or the contagious act of doubting, but to move forward in faith.

We are committed to being patient in this time of change and to speculate positively on increased opportunities to better serve our membership and our respective communities.

Several committee reports were addressed at the executive board meeting on July 15th, 2004

asked chapter officers, regional directors and all past officers to stand and be acknowledged.

Karen Josephson gave her State of the Guild address introducing members of the Board.

Public Relations Director Wendy Morrell sang "Tell the World Sacred Dance is Here."

Development Director Kathryn Mihelick had sent in words to "Pennies from Heaven" which Pat Woodbury sang.

Membership Director and website administrator Connie Tyler described the "Eensy weensy spider" who found the internet.

Peggy Hoffman demonstrated the large number of hats she will be wearing as our contract staff person.

Chapters and Regions Director Merle Wade asked everyone to "show us your twinkle."

Karen presented a verse of Chattanooga Choo Choo for Treasurer Jolyn Walker.

Vice President nominee Stella Matsuda demonstrated her future role as "President of Vice."

Karen presented another verse of Chattanooga Choo Choo for Recording Secretary nominee Annmarie Pittman.

Recording Secretary Ellen Young performed words sent in by Journal Editor Toni Intravaia.

Corresponding Secretary Lucy Knopf described her work - and the paper on her desk turned into a card for out-going President Karen Josephson. Lucy followed this with a new hat for Karen.

Karen closed her report by singing "Thanks for the Memories."

Sally Moravitz reported a total of 63 ballots: 21 received in the mail, 18 gathered at the Lakeshore mini-festival, 24 filled out at the meeting. The slate was elected unanimously.

Newly elected President Ellen Roberts Young presented her goal for her two year term: building a better floor for the Guild to leap from. She urged all members to start thinking and talking about what leaps we want to make.

Peggy Hoffman made announcements about the rest of the mini-festival program and evaluation forms.

Dana Schlegel demonstrated a piece of an Armenian fisherman's dance, as a symbol that "together we can do it."

A chorus of "so move" followed Ellen's request for a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Roberts Young, outgoing Recording Secretary

and the changes that are to come, were envisioned as improvements in our structure and in our performance as an organization. Some improvements will be swift and others will, with your cooperation, take time to implement. For example, a change in our chapter/region structure will necessitate a shifting of people and positions, but we expect to boast a lasting and profound revitalization. We are, in fact, moving toward creating more chapters and fewer regions. We have examined the infrastructure of several organizations and agree that this model may very well work for us. We need your help and I will try to be specific as to what you can do.

We all give to the Guild in varied and numerous ways, just as we all receive benefits from those gifts - this, too, is evident of our enduring commitment.

1. Please go to the SDG website, put in your password and then click on Current News (found in the middle of the page). In the members only section of Current News you will find a link to the new Governance Proposal. You can read the proposal and make comments (on each page) on what changes to expect in the near future.

2. In the meantime, volunteers will be needed to act as "contact persons" for as many as 14 regions where directors have had to vacate their positions.

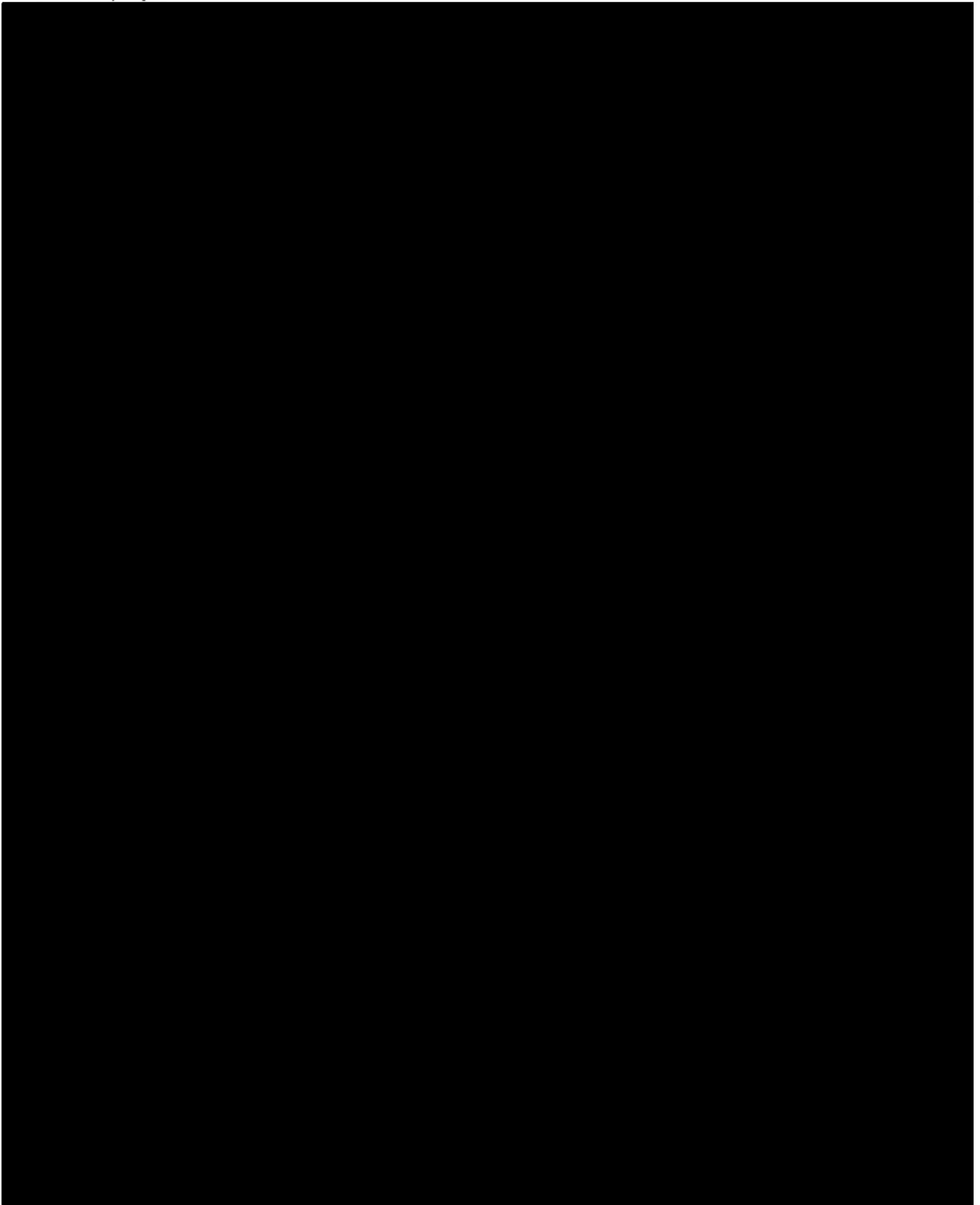
3. We are fortunate to have 10 very active chapters and 18 very active regions, but holding on to our membership where there is no designated leadership will be a struggle. A "contact person's" responsibilities will not resemble the duties of a regional director and/or a chapter representative. A periodic phone call and/or email/post with pertinent SDG news and reminders to check the SDG website is what is needed. Specific information and news will come from either me or other members of the board and you will be asked to pass it on.

The Board joins with me in anticipating that this simplistic strategy will help keep members informed no matter where they are. Further, it is hoped that pockets of sacred dancers will pop up in several places forming meeting clusters and eventually chapters. Following is a list of inactive regions and a big request for volunteers. Please let me hear from you:

- Arkansas/Mississippi
- Connecticut/Massachusetts/Rhode Island
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- Ontario, Canada
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Taiwan
- Tennessee
- Utah
- Washington
- Wyoming



Directory Updates





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CALENDAR

October 17, 2004 - Praise and Dance Workshop, Jolyn Walker, Leader, at St. Stephen of Hungary Church, Spring Valley, New York. Contact: Betsy O'Neill, 317 East 83rd Street, Apt 2E, NY, NY 10028.

October 22-24, 2004 - Northern California Chapter of the Sacred Dance Guild Mini-Festival, "Many Faiths, Many Forms, Dancing the Sacred Together" at Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley California. Contact: Connie Taylor, 2322 8th Street, Berkeley, CA 94710 or e-mail connie@deephum.com.

November 5-7, 2004 - Northern New Jersey Sacred Dance Guild Mini-Festival "Rejoice, Renew, Rebirth", Montclair, NJ. Contact: Sylvia Bryant, Regional Director NNJSDG, 363 Claremont Avenue, Unit#3, Montclair, NJ 07042 or e-mail SBR719@aol.com.

November, 2004 - "Worship and Warfare in Dance", Island of Dominica WI hosted by Oasis Dance Ministry, People's Pentecostal Family Church. Contact: Bishop Michael Daniel at 1-767-448-3273 or e-mail theoasis@cwdom.dm.

January 10-14, 2005 -Dance Meditation, 2005 Course with Carlo De Sola. Pacific

School of Religion, Berkeley, CA Contact: Doug Adams, 510-849-8285 or e-mail dadams@psr.edu.

July, 2005 - WDA Global Assembly, Toronto, Canada acclaimed "the most multi-cultural center in the world."

July 21-26, 2005 - Festival 2005 "Dancing Our Roots...Stretching New Branches" Connecticut College, New London, Connecticut. Details: See Page 10 this Issue.

Executive Board Meetings

Fall Meeting - Saturday, October 1, 2004, Ottawa, Canada

Winter and Spring Meetings - TBA Board-at-Large and Annual Meetings at Connecticut College

Sacred Dance Guild Web Site:
www.sacreddanceguild.org

You can apply for membership to the Sacred Dance Guild in three ways: 1) Complete the form and return with your membership dues. 2) Join online at our website, www.sacreddanceguild.org. 3) Email our Membership Director (see address below).

Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State/Province _____
Country/Zip/Postal Code _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Membership Dues:	1 year Domestic/International Membership	\$35
	2 year Domestic/International Membership	\$62
	1 year Student/Senior (65+) Membership	\$25
	1 year Group Membership	\$82
	Life Membership	\$1,000

Please make checks payable to Sacred Dance Guild or charge your membership by providing the following information.

Visa _____ Mastercard _____

Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____ Amount Charged _____ Signature _____

Please return to Membership Director Connie Tyler, 2322 8th Street, Berkeley, CA 94710, connie@deephum.com



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